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DISTANT POSSESSIONS—THE PARTING OF THE WAYS.

BY ANDREW CARNEGIE.

TWICE only have the American people been called upon to decide a question of such vital import as that now before them.

Is the Republic, the apostle of Triumphant Democracy, of the rule of the people, to abandon her political creed and endeavor to establish in other lands the rule of the foreigner over the people, Triumphant Despotism?

Is the Republic to remain one homogeneous whole, one united people, or to become a scattered and disjointed aggregate of widely separated and alien races?

Is she to continue the task of developing her vast continent until it holds a population as great as that of Europe, all Americans, or to abandon that destiny to annex, and to attempt to govern, other far distant parts of the world as outlying possessions, which can never be integral parts of the Republic?

Is she to exchange internal growth and advancement for the development of external possessions which can never be really hers in any fuller sense than India is British or Cochin-China French? Such is the portentous question of the day. Two equally important questions the American people have decided wisely, and their flag now waves over the greater portion of the English-speaking race; their country is the richest of all countries, first in manufactures, in mining and in commerce (home and foreign), first this year also in exports. But, better than this, the average condition of its people in education and in living is the best. The luxuries of the masses in other lands are the necessities of life for ours. The schoolhouse and the church are nowhere so widely distributed. Progress in the arts

and sciences is surprising. In international affairs her influence grows so fast and foreshadows so much, that one of the foremost statesmen has recently warned Europe that it must combine against her if it is to hold its own in the industrial world. The Republic remains one solid whole, its estate enclosed in a ring fence, united, impregnable, triumphant; clearly destined to become the foremost power of the world, if she continue to follow the true path. Such are the fruits of wise judgment in deciding the two great issues of the past, Independence and The Union.

In considering the issue now before us, the agitator, the demagogue, has no part. Not feeling, not passion, but deliberate judgment alone should have place. The question should be calmly weighed; it is not a matter of party, nor of class; for the fundamental interest of every citizen is a common interest, that which is best for the poorest being best for the richest. Let us, therefore, reason together and be well assured, before we change our position, that we are making no plunge into an abyss. Happily, we have the experience of others to guide us, the most instructive being that of our own race in Great Britain.

There are two kinds of national possessions, one colonies, the other dependencies. In the former we establish and reproduce our own race. Thus Britain has peopled Canada and Australia with English-speaking people, who have naturally adopted our ideas of self-government. That the world has benefited thereby goes without saying; that Britain has done a great work as the mother of nations is becoming more and more appreciated the more the student learns of worldwide affairs. No nation that ever existed has done so much for the progress of the world as the little islands in the North Sea, known as Britain.

With "dependencies" it is otherwise. The most grievous burden which Britain has upon her shoulders is that of India, for there it is impossible for our race to grow. The child of English-speaking parents must be removed and reared in Britain. The British Indian official must have long respites in his native land. India means death to our race. The characteristic feature of a "dependency" is that the acquiring power cannot reproduce its own race there.

Inasmuch as the territories outside our own continent which our country may be tempted to annex cannot be "colonies," but only "dependencies," we need not dwell particularly upon the

advantages or disadvantages of the former, although the writer is in thorough accord with Disraeli, who said even of colonies: "Our colonies are millstones round the neck of Britain; they lean upon us while they are weak, and leave us when they become strong." This is just what our Republic did with Britain.

There was something to be said for colonies from the point of view of pecuniary gain in the olden days, when they were treated as the legitimate spoil of the conqueror. It is Spain's fatal mistake that she has never realized that it is impossible to follow this policy in our day. Britain is the only country which has realized this truth. British colonies have complete self-government; they even tax the products of their own motherland. That Britain "possesses" her colonies is a mere figure of speech; that her colonies "possess" her is nearer the truth. "Our Colonial Empire" seems a big phrase, but, as far as material benefits are concerned, the balance is the other way. Thus, even loyal Canada trades more with us than with Britain. She buys her Union Jacks in New York. Trade does not follow the flag in our day; it scents the lowest price current. There is no patriotism in exchanges.

Some of the organs of manufacturing interests, we observe, favor foreign possessions as necessary or helpful markets for our products. But the exports of the United States this year are greater than those of any other nation in the world. Even Britain's exports are less, yet Britain "possesses," it is said, a hundred "colonies" and "dependencies" scattered all over the world. The fact that the United States has none does not prevent her products and manufactures from invading Japan, China, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and all parts of the world in competition with those of Britain. "Possession" of colonies or dependencies is not necessary for trade reasons. What her colonies are valued for, and justly so, by Britain, is the happiness and pride which the mother feels in her children. The instinct of motherhood is gratified, and no one living places a higher estimate upon the sentiment than I do. Britain is the kindest of mothers, and well deserves the devotion of her children.

If we could establish colonies of Americans, and grow Americans in any part of the world now unpopulated and unclaimed by any of the great powers, and thus follow the example of Britain, heart and mind might tell us that we should have to

think twice, yea, thrice, before deciding adversely. Even then our decision should be adverse; but there is at present no such question before us. What we have to face is the question whether we should embark upon the difficult and dangerous policy of undertaking the government of alien races in lands where it is impossible for our own race to be produced.

As long as we remain free from distant possessions we are impregnable against serious attack; yet, it is true, we have to consider what obligations may fall upon us of an international character requiring us to send our forces to points beyond our own territory. Up to this time we have disclaimed all intention to interfere with affairs beyond our own continent, and only claimed the right to watch over American interests according to the Monroe Doctrine, which is now firmly established. This carries with it serious responsibilities, no doubt, which we cannot escape. European nations must consult us upon territorial questions pertaining to our Continent, but this makes no tremendous demand upon our military or naval forces. We are at home, as it were, near our base, and sure of the support of the power in whose behalf and on whose request we may act. If it be found essential to possess a coaling station at Porto Rico for future possible, though not probable, contingencies, there is no insuperable objection. Neither would the control of the West Indies be alarming, if pressed upon us by Britain, since the islands are small and the populations must remain insignificant and without national aspirations. Besides, they are upon our own shores, American in every sense. Their defense by us would be easy. No protest need be entered against such legitimate and peaceful expansion in our own hemisphere, should events work in that direction. I am no "Little" American, afraid of growth, either in population or territory, provided always that the new territory be American and that it will produce Americans, and not foreign races bound in time to be false to the Republic in order to be true to themselves.

As I write, the cable announces the annexation of Hawaii, which is more serious, but the argument for this has been the necessity for holding the only coaling station in the Pacific so situated as to be essential to any power desirous of successfully attacking our Pacific coast. Until the Nicaragua Canal is made, it is impossible to deny the cogency of this contention. We need

not consider it a measure of offense or aggression, but as strictly defensive. The population of the islands is so small that national aspirations are not to be encountered, which is a great matter, nor is it obtained by conquest. It is ours by a vote of its people, which robs its acquisition of many dangers. Let us hope that our far outlying possessions may end with Hawaii.

To reduce it to the concrete, the question is: Shall we attempt to establish ourselves as a power in the Far East and possess the Philippines for glory? The glory we already have, in Dewey's victory overcoming the power of Spain in a manner which adds one more to the many laurels of the American navy, which, from its infancy till now, has divided the laurels with Britain upon the sea. The Philippines have about seven and a half millions of people, composed of races bitterly hostile to one another, alien races, ignorant of our language and institutions. Americans cannot be grown there. The islands have been exploited for the benefit of Spain, against whom they have twice rebelled, like the Cubans; but even Spain has received little pecuniary benefit from them. The estimated revenue of the Philippines in 1894-95 was £2,715,980, the expenditure being £2,656,026, leaving a net result of about \$300,000. The United States could obtain even this trifling sum from the inhabitants only by oppressing them as Spain has done. But, if we take the Philippines, we shall be forced to govern them as generously as Britain governs her dependencies, which means that they will yield us nothing, and probably be a source of annual expense. Certainly, they will be a grievous drain upon revenue if we consider the enormous army and navy which we shall be forced to maintain upon their account.

There are many objections to our undertaking the government of dependencies; one I venture to submit as being peculiar to ourselves. We should be placed in a wrong position. Consider Great Britain in India to-day. She has established schools and taught the people our language. In the Philippines, we may assume that we should do the same, and with similar results? To travel through India as an American is a point of great advantage if one wishes to know the people of India and their aspirations. They unfold to Americans their inmost thoughts, which they very naturally withhold from their masters, the British. When in India, I talked with many who had received an English education in the

British schools; and found that they had read and pondered most upon Cromwell and Hampden, Wallace and Bruce, and Tell; upon Washington and Franklin. The Briton is sowing the seed of rebellion with one hand in his schools—for education makes rebels—while with the other he is oppressing patriots who desire the independence of their country. The national patriotism upon which a Briton plumes himself he must repress in India. It is only a matter of time when India, the so-called gem of the British crown, is to glitter red again. British control of India is rendered possible to-day only by the division of races, or rather of religions there. The Hindoos and Mohammedans still mistrust each other more than they do the British, but caste is rapidly passing away, and religious prejudices are softening. Whenever this distrust disappears, Britain is liable to be expelled, at a loss of life and treasure which cannot be computed. The aspirations of a people for independent existence are seldom repressed, nor, according to American ideas hitherto, should they be. If it be a noble aspiration for the Indian or the Cuban, as it was for the citizen of the United States himself, and for the various South American republics once under Spain, to have a country to live and, if necessary, to die for, why is not the revolt noble which the man of the Philippines has been making against Spain? Is it possible that the Republic is to be placed in the position of the suppressor of the Philippine struggle for independence? Surely, that is impossible. With what face shall we hang in the school-houses of the Philippines the Declaration of our own Independence, and yet deny independence to them? What response will the heart of the Philippine Islander make, as he reads of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation? Are we to practise independence and preach subordination, to teach rebellion in our books, yet to stamp it out with our swords, to sow the seed of revolt and expect the harvest of loyalty? President McKinley's call for volunteers to fight for Cuban independence against the cruel dominion of Spain meets with prompt response, but who would answer the call of the President of an "imperial" republic for free citizens to fight the Washington and slaughter the patriots of some distant dependency which struggles for independence?

It has hitherto been the glorious mission of the Republic to establish upon secure foundations Trimphant Democracy, and the

world now understands government of the people for the people and by the people. Tires the Republic so soon of its mission that it must, perforce, discard it to undertake the impossible task of establishing Triumphant Despotism, the rule of the foreigner over the people, and must the millions of the Philippines who have been asserting their God-given right to govern themselves, be the first victims of Americans, whose proudest boast is that they conquered independence for themselves?

Let another phase of the question be carefully weighed. Europe is to-day an armed camp, not chiefly because the home territories of its various nations are threatened, but because of fear of aggressive action upon the part of other nations touching outlying "possessions." France resents British control of Egypt and is fearful of its West African possessions; Russia seeks Chinese territory, with a view to expansion to the Pacific; Germany also seeks distant possessions; Britain, who has acquired so many dependencies, is so fearful of an attack upon them that this year she is spending nearly eighty millions of dollars upon additional warships, and Russia, Germany and France follow suit. Japan is a new element of anxiety; and by the end of the year it is computed she will have 67 formidable ships of war. The naval powers of Europe, and Japan also, are apparently determined to be prepared for a terrific struggle for possessions in the Far East, close to the Philippines—and why not for these islands themselves? Into this vortex the Republic is cordially invited to enter by those powers who expect her policy to be of benefit to them, but her action is jealously watched by those who fear that her power might be used against them.

It has never been considered the part of wisdom to thrust one's hand into the hornet's nest, and it does seem as if the United States must lose all claim to ordinary prudence and good sense if she enter this arena, and become involved in the intrigues and threats of war which make Europe an armed camp.

It is the parting of the ways. We have a continent to populate and develop; there are only 23 persons to the square mile in the United States. England has 370, Belgium 571, Germany 250. A tithe of the cost of maintaining our sway over the Philippines would improve our internal waterways; deepen our harbors; build the Nicaraguan Canal; construct a waterway to the ocean from the Great Lakes; an inland canal along the Atlantic seaboard; a

canal across Florida, saving 800 miles distance between New York and New Orleans; connect Lake Michigan with the Mississippi; deepen all the harbors upon the lakes; build a canal from Lake Erie to the Allegheny River; slackwater through movable dams the entire length of the Ohio River to Cairo; thoroughly improve the Lower and Upper Mississippi, and all our seaboard harbors. All these enterprises would be as nothing in cost in comparison to the sums required for the experiment of possessing the Philippine Islands, 7,000 miles from our shores. If the object be to render our Republic powerful among nations, can there be any doubt as to which policy is the better? To be more powerful at home is the surest way to be more powerful abroad. To-day the Republic stands the friend of all nations, the ally of none; she has no ambitious designs upon the territory of any power upon another continent; she crosses none of their ambitious designs, evokes no jealousy of the bitter sort, inspires no fears; she is not one of them, scrambling for "possessions;" she stands apart, pursuing her own great mission, and teaching all nations by example. Let her become a power annexing foreign territory, and all is changed in a moment.

If we are to compete with other nations for foreign possessions we must have a navy like theirs. It should be superior to any other navy, or we play a second part. It is not enough to have a navy equal to that of Russia or of France, for Russia and France may combine against us just as they may against Britain. We at once enter the field as a rival of Britain, the chief possessor of foreign possessions, and who can guarantee that we shall not even have to measure our power against her?

What it means to enter the list of military and naval powers having foreign possessions may be gathered from the following considerations. First, look at our future navy. If it is only to equal that of France it means 51 battleships; if of Russia, 40 battleships. If we cannot play the game without being at least the equal of any of our rivals, then 80 battleships is the number Britain possesses. We now have only 4, with 5 building. Cruisers, armed and unarmed, swell the number threefold, Britain having 273 ships of the line built or ordered, with 308 torpedo boats in addition; France having 134 ships of the line and 269 torpedo boats. All these nations are adding ships rapidly. Every armor and gunmaking plant in the world is busy night and day. Ships

are indispensable, but recent experience shows that soldiers are equally so. While the immense armies of Europe need not be duplicated, yet we shall certainly be too weak unless our army is at least twenty times what it has been—say 500,000 men. Even then we shall be powerless as against three of our rivals. Germany's army on a peace footing numbers 562,352 men; on a war footing, 3,000,000; France's army on a peace footing, 615,413; on a war footing, 2,500,000; Russia's on a peace footing, 750,944; on a war footing, 2,512,143. Even Spain has an army, as we are discovering in Cuba. It foots up on a peace footing 128,000; on a war footing, 1,083,000 men. All Spaniards, like all Frenchmen, and Germans, over 19 years of age, are subject to military service. They are in fact first soldiers, then citizens.

This drain upon the resources of these countries has become a necessity from their respective positions, largely as graspers for foreign possessions. The United States, happily, to-day has no such necessity, her neighbors being powerless against her, since her possessions are concentrated and her power is one solid mass.

To-day two great powers in the world are compact, developing themselves in peace throughout vast coterminous territories. When war threatens they have no outlying "possessions" which can never be really "possessed," but which they are called upon to defend. They fight upon the exposed edge only of their own soil in case of attack, and are not only invulnerable, but they could not be more than inconvenienced by the world in arms against them. These powers are Russia and the United States. The attempt of Britain to check Russia, if the wild counsels of Mr. Chamberlain were followed, could end in nothing but failure. With the irresistible force of the glacier, Russia moves upon the plains below. Well for Russia, and well for the world, is her advance over pagan China, better even for Britain from the standpoint of business, for every Russian to-day trades as much with Britain as do nine Chinamen. Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Spain, are all vulnerable, having departed from the sagacious policy of keeping possessions and power concentrated. Should the United States depart from this policy, she also must be so weakened in consequence as never to be able to play the commanding part in the world, disjointed, that she can play whenever she desires if she remain compact.

Whether the United States maintain its present unique posi-

tion of safety or forfeit it through acquiring foreign possessions, is to be decided by its action in regard to the Philippines; for, fortunately, the independence of Cuba is assured, for this the Republic has proclaimed to the world that she has drawn the sword. But why should the less than two millions of Cuba receive national existence and the seven and a half millions of the Philippines be denied it? The United States, thus far in their history, have no page reciting self-sacrifice made for others; all their gains have been for themselves. This void is now to be grandly filled. The page which recites the resolve of the Republic to rid her neighbor Cuba from the foreign "possessor" will grow brighter with the passing centuries, which may dim many pages now deemed illustrious. Should the coming American be able to point to Cuba and the Philippines rescued from foreign domination and enjoying independence won for them by his country and given to them without money and without price, he will find no citizen of any other land able to claim for his country services so disinterested and so noble.

We repeat there is no power in the world that could do more than inconvenience the United States by attacking its fringe, which is all that the world combined could do, so long as our country is not compelled to send its forces beyond its own compact shores to defend worthless "possessions." If our country were blockaded by the united powers of the world for years, she would emerge from the embargo richer and stronger, and with her own resources more completely developed. We have little to fear from external attack. No thorough blockade of our enormous seaboard is possible; but even if it were, the few indispensable articles not produced by ourselves (if there were any such) would reach us by way of Mexico or Canada at slightly increased cost.

From every point of view we are forced to the conclusion that the past policy of the Republic is her true policy for the future; for safety, for peace, for happiness, for progress, for wealth, for power—for all that makes a nation blessed.

Not till the war drum is silent and the day of calm peace returns, can the issue be soberly considered.

Twice have the American people met crucial issues wisely, and in the third they are not to fail.

ANDREW CARNEGIE.